



Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services

State Public Health Laboratory

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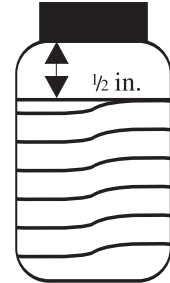
Instructions for Collecting Bacteriological Water Samples from Swimming Pools and Bathing Beaches

Sample Bottles

All sample bottles are sterile and have been treated with sodium thiosulfate to reduce the chlorine present in the water at the moment the sample is collected. If sodium thiosulfate were not used, the chlorine would be acting on the bacteria in the sample while it was being held or transported for testing. It's presence is not critical for natural bathing beach samples, since these waters are not normally chlorinated.

Leave 1/2 inch air space for mixing at the laboratory

Sample must be at least 100 ml (line on bottle).



Collection of Samples

1. Swimming Pools: Collect samples in the area of, and during the time of, maximum bather density. Carefully remove the cap of the sterile sample bottle and hold bottle near it's base at an angle of 45°. Plunge the bottle vertically into the water approximately 8 inches (20 cm) and fill in a slow sweeping motion, making sure that the sodium thiosulfate is not washed out. Sampling should be submitted weekly to arrive at the laboratory no later than Thursday. Sampling time should be varied day to day and between late morning and afternoon. Samples should be taken from the deep and shallow ends of the pool and the wading pool, collecting at points between water inlets.

2. Bathing Beaches: Sampling should be from water at established beaches, and be collected in water depths of three to six feet and at a depth of one foot. Use a boat or wade carefully to prevent stirring up bottom sediments. Holding the bottle with both hands, lower the bottle into the water to a depth of one foot. Quickly remove the lid and allow the water to fill the bottle. Replace the lid before removing the bottle from the water. Holding the bottle sideways in the water will allow the proper volume of water to enter the bottle, and allow for some airspace to remain. Take samples over the range of environmental and climatic conditions, especially during times when maximal pollution can be expected, i.e., periods of current and wind influences, stormwater runoff, sewage bypassing, high bather load, etc.

Delivery to the Laboratory

Samples should be mailed "First Class" at the post office, or sent by other means, immediately after the samples are collected, to arrive at the laboratory within 48 hours. Samples arriving in the lab more than 48 hours after collection will not be analyzed.

For more information

Contact the State Public Health Laboratory's Environmental Bacteriology Unit at 573-522-4991 ext. 3558, or the Department of Health and Senior Services' Section for Environmental Public Health at 1-800-392-0272.